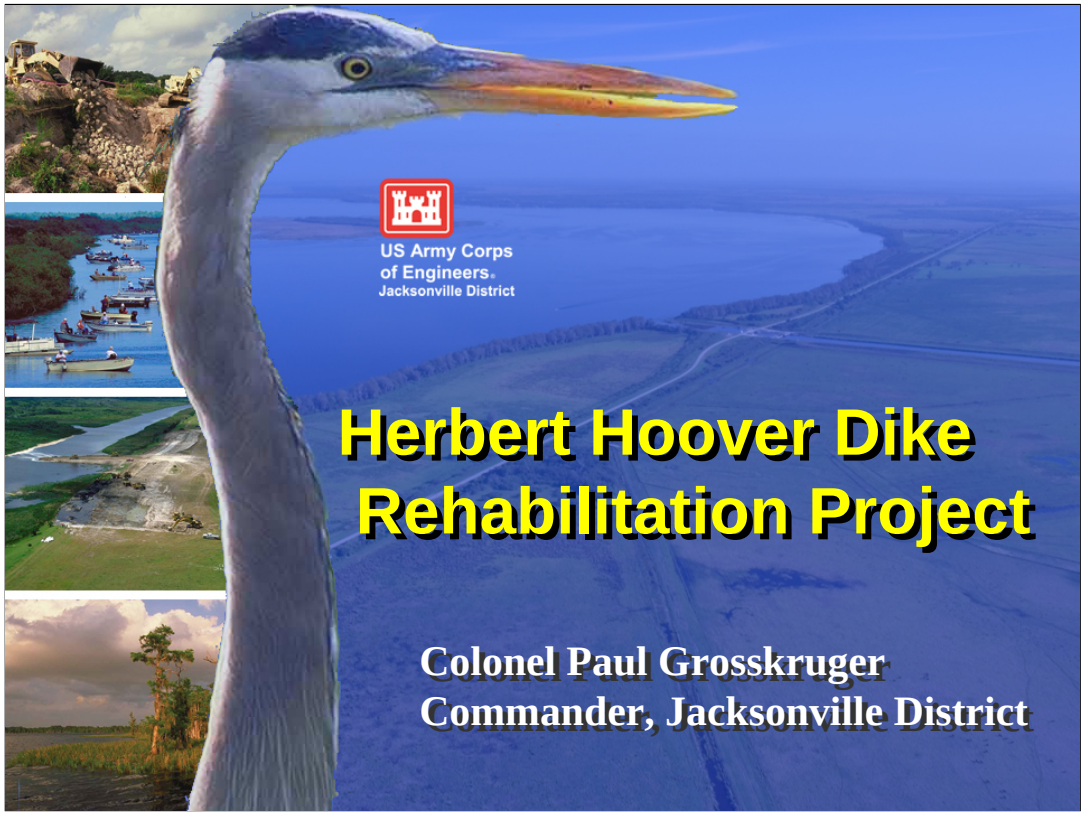


All narration notes in this briefing were not meant to be read verbatim but rather used as a speaker guideline.

(Introduction)

Thank you Congressman Hastings for inviting the Corps of Engineers to speak at tonight's meeting.

We appreciate this opportunity to talk about the HHD.

HHD is our highest priority and I'm here to share the latest information with you.

History

US Army Corps of Engineers

- 1926 & 1928 hurricanes – Lake Okeechobee overflows
- Congress tasks Corps to build first dike

- 1947 hurricane floods huge part of S FL
- 1948 approval of C&SF Project and longer, taller dike
- 1962 Herbert Hoover Dike dedication

Let’s start with a little background

Lake Okeechobee was shaped by catastrophic events

•1926 and 1928 hurricanes overflowed shallow banks of the Lake

•1947 hurricane, though not Lake Okeechobee flooding, caused loss of livestock, crops and widespread flooding that did not recede for months

•Dike - Best engineering was used at that time

- HHD construction materials allow uncontrolled seepage

History

US Army Corps of Engineers

- 1990s Corps study finds weak areas in HHD
- 2000 Congress approves Corps proposal for fix; analysis and design begins
- 2005 Corps starts construction

More background

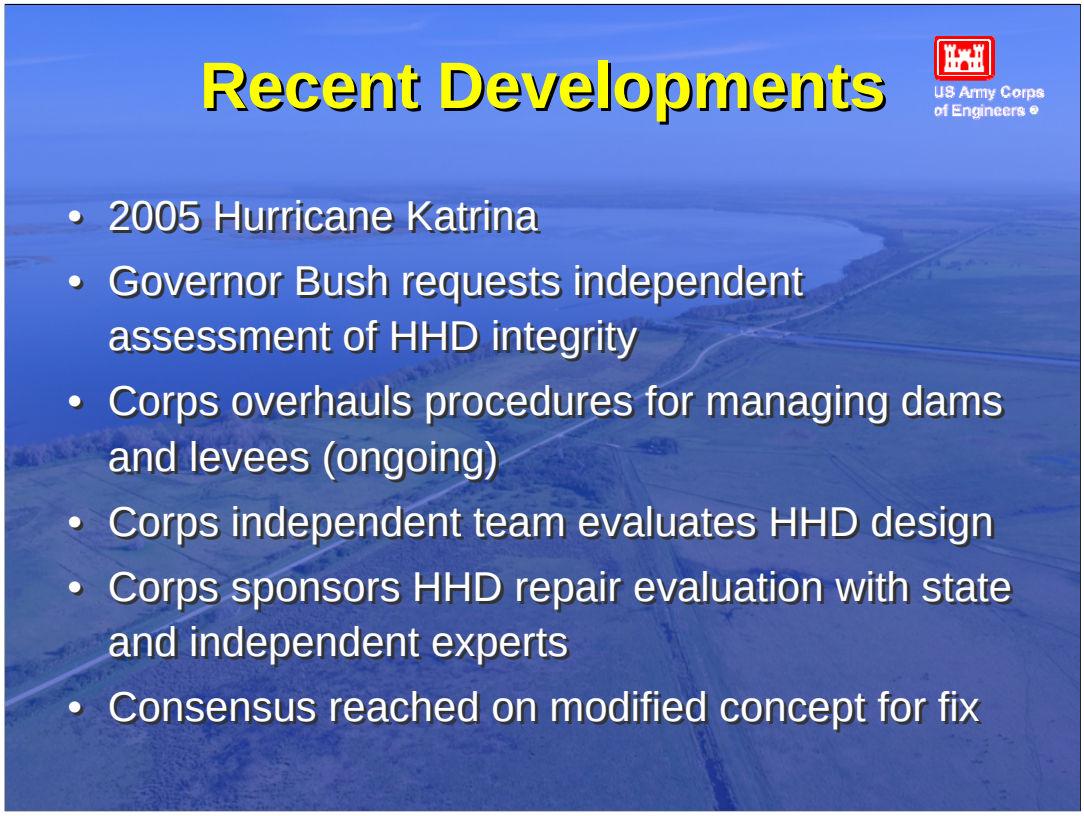
By 1990s, Dike 60 years old and weaknesses were being observed.

Study identified weak areas.

A solution recommended

2000 authorization

2005 construction starts



Hurricane Katrina heightened public awareness and concern about levees and dikes

Gov Bush asks for independent review of HHD. Do we have potential for a Katrina-like disaster in Florida?

Safety of the public is paramount to the Corps and the State. We requested Corps regional and national experts to conduct an Independent Technical Review using lessons learned from Katrina.

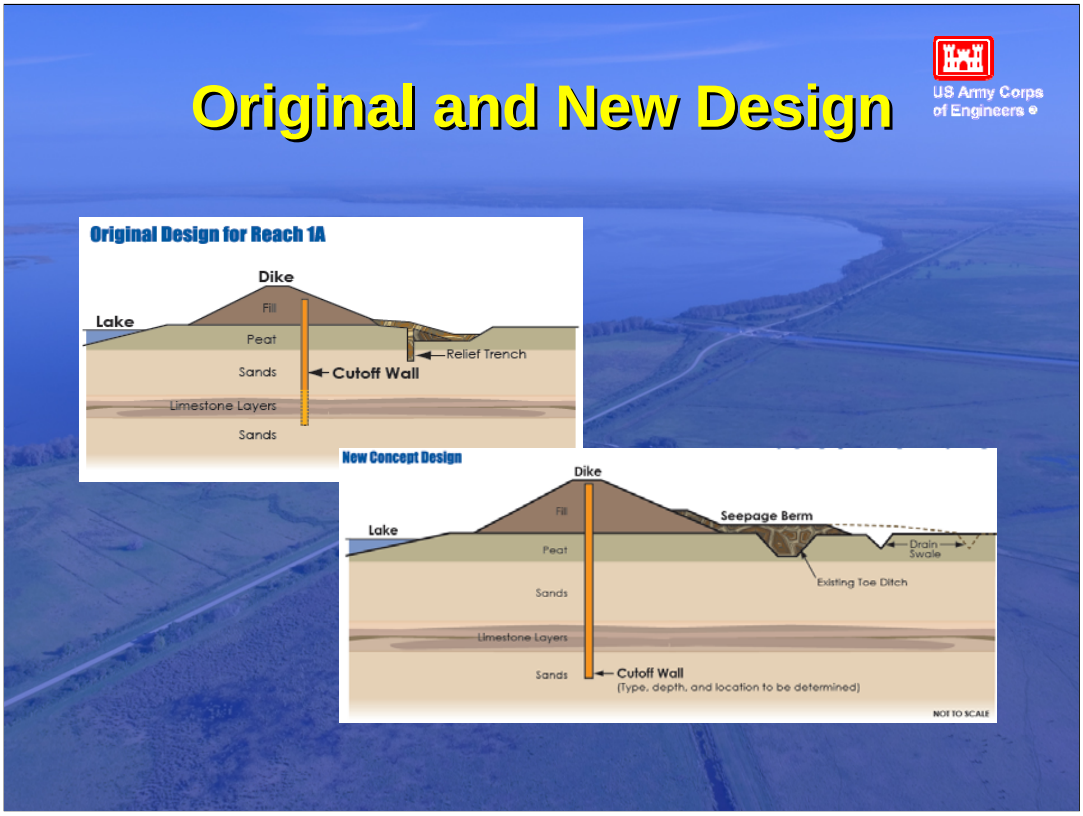
The lessons learned from the New Orleans Independent Performance Evaluation Technical Report was incorporated into this conceptual HHD design.

The Corps, independent teams of experts, and the state came to consensus on a more robust and reliable design solution.

The design approach that was finally selected closely mirrors an alternative that was developed by the Corps in 2000, but not chosen by the state and federal partners because it required additional and costly real estate and may have impacted regional groundwater.

Decision was based on the team's knowledge and best professional judgment at that time.

The post-Katrina environment allowed us to overcome significant constraints and focus solely on public safety and risk reduction goals.



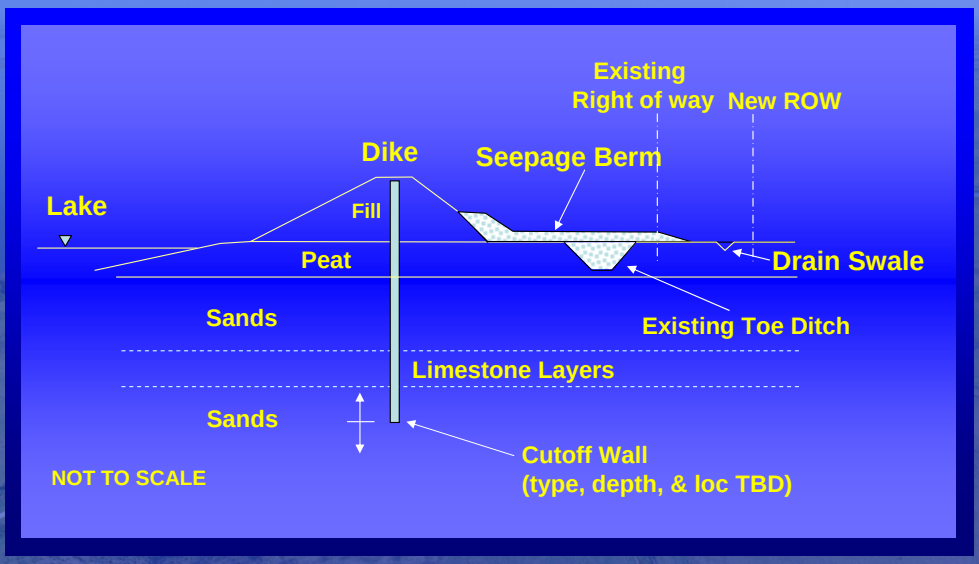
As you can see here, the original design uses less property than the concept design.

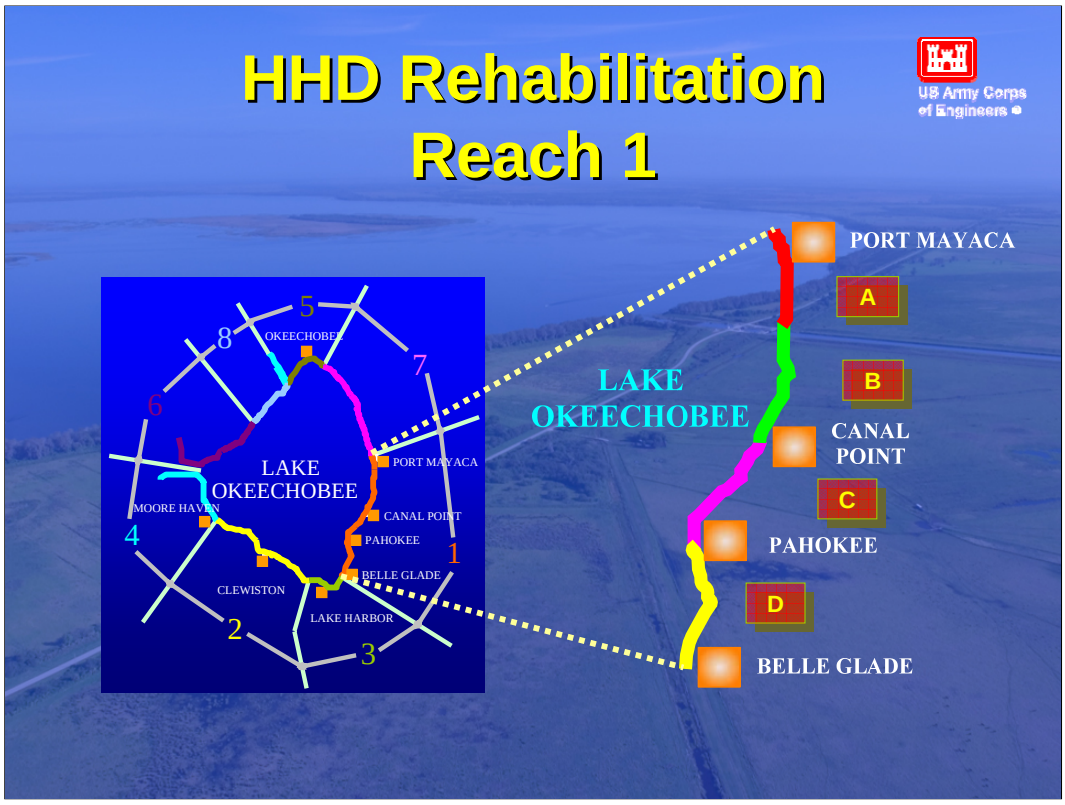
There are also variables on the cutoff wall such as the type, depth and location within the dike.

Let’s take a closer look at the dike and the steps we’ll take to rehabilitate it.

Conceptual Design

US Army Corps of Engineers

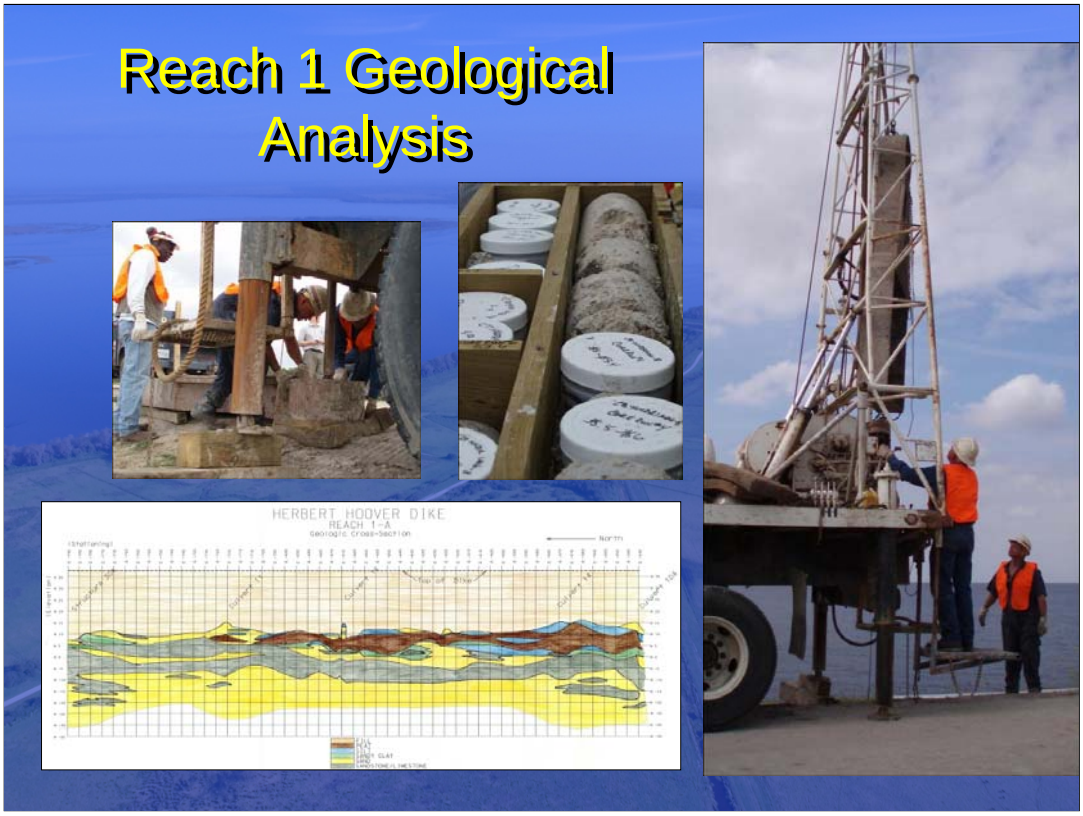




We're currently working to expedite the redesign and resume construction on Reach 1A between Port Mayaca and Sand Cut. The project team is prioritizing and initiating design and construction in areas that we already own and that are most in need of repair.

With our SFWMD partners, we're planning for "general" real estate acquisition to provide us with the right of way necessary to build the berm.

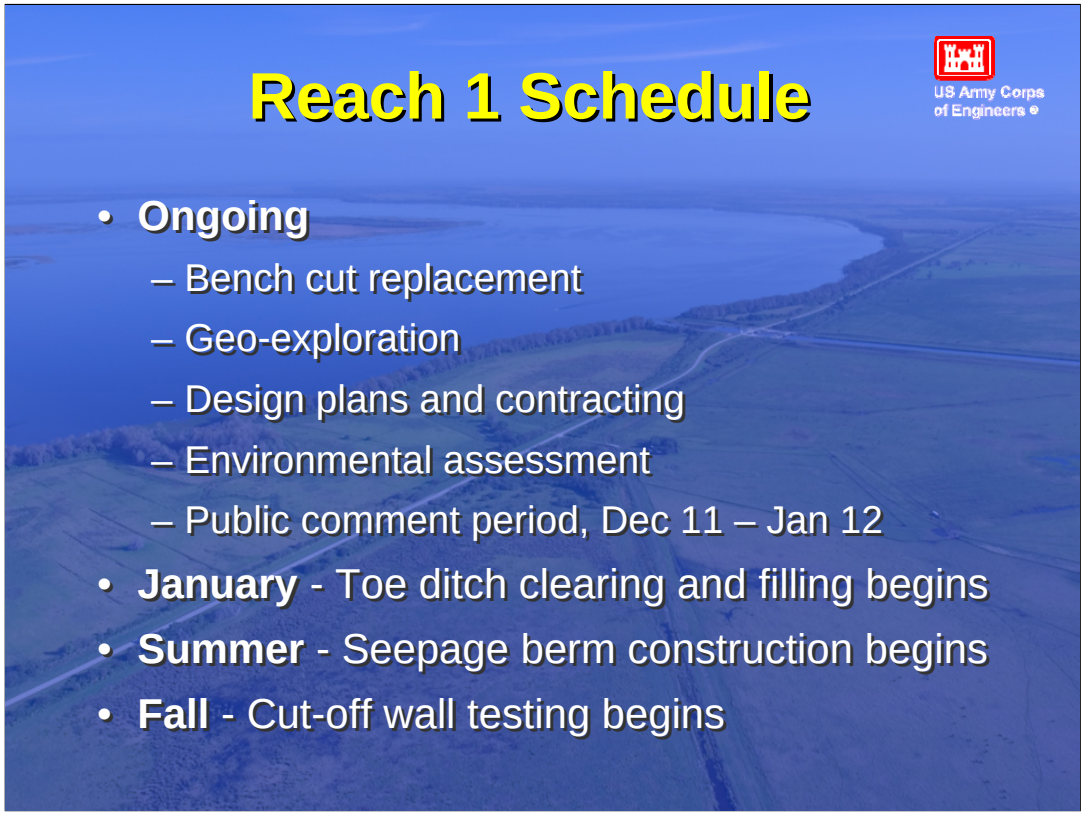
Various activities are taking place at different locations. For instance… (next slide, geotech work in Reach 1).



We’re doing more boring and analysis to fill in data gaps.

The geology will help us best determine how deep the cutoff wall needs to go. We want the cutoff wall to go below lime stone layer.

The deeper the wall goes, the less distance between the dike toe and the seepage berm.



In January, you may notice trucks and equipment on the roads nearby as Corps personnel from Clewiston begin clearing the toe ditch.

The ditch has to be cleared first of vegetation before it is filled or a soft "peat"-like layer will weaken the structure's reliability.

Once we start "demucking" the ditch, we'll have a better idea of how much fill is needed – then you'll see more construction trucks and equipment in the area.

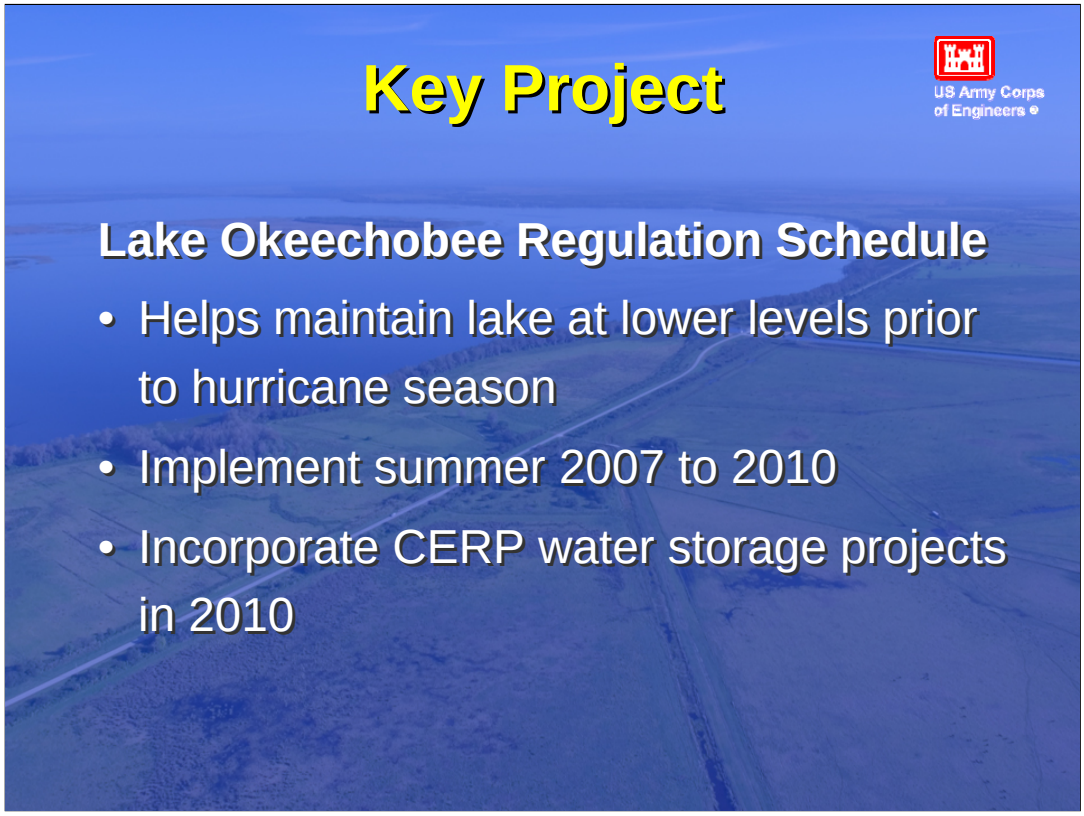
The seepage berm (graduated filter) will literally be built on top of the toe ditch. We'll start this in the summer, and then start cut-off wall testing this fall.

Our five year construction plan focuses on about 50 miles of dike from Port Mayaca to Moore Haven.

We're estimating the dike construction will cost about $10 million dollars per mile for this design – or about $500 million to complete reaches 1, 2 and 3.

We're currently looking at locating a field office at the dike – these experts will provide quality assurance and direct oversight of the construction.

In the meantime, however, we're also working with the SFWMD and with local authorities to be best prepared for catastrophic hurricanes. (next slide)



At a high water level, Lake Okeechobee poses a serious threat to the dike and to the communities surrounding it.

We recently developed a plan – or regulation schedule - to keep the lake at safer water levels than the current plan would have allowed except through reactive deviations.

This plan is proactive and allows for flexibility.

In summer 2007, water managers will immediately begin to develop a new regulation schedule that will take into account construction of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects. The projects will provide many additional options for water storage and management. The new regulation schedule is currently planned for 2010 implementation.


US Army Corps
of Engineers
Questions?
Thank you!